

1. An isolated nucleic acid comprising the nucleotide sequence shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:1).

5 2. An isolated nucleic acid comprising the nucleotide sequence encoding the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:3 having a glutamic acid to lysine change at amino acid 74.

3. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding a loss-of-function mutant of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:3, wherein the mutation in the nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of:

- 10 a) n3400;
b) n3407; and
c) n3377, and wherein said mutation is a ced-9 loss-of-function mutation.

4. The nucleic acid of claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said nucleic acid is from a nematode.

5. A vector, wherein said vector comprises the nucleic acid of claim 1, 2, or 3.

15 6. The vector of claim 5, wherein said vector is within a cell.

7. The vector of claim 6, wherein said cell is a plant cell.

8. The vector of claim 6, wherein said cell is a mammalian cell.